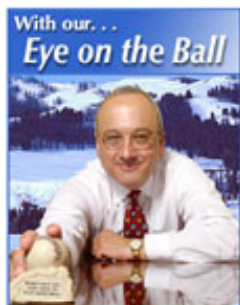


Season's Greetings from the **Bulletin**

THE VDOT ONLINE EMPLOYEE NEWSPAPER



Another Success: Route 622

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Taking Care of Business

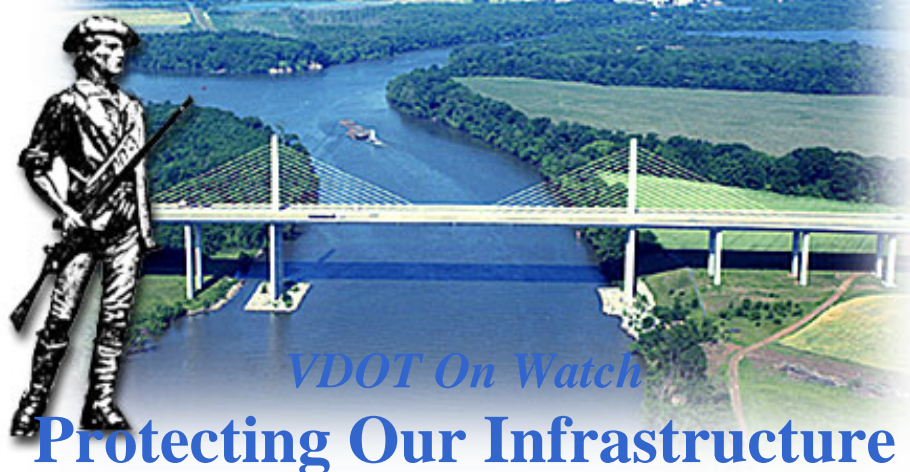
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In an era of heightened security, VDOT has a lot of government property to protect. In fact, the department is responsible for 99 percent of Virginia's state-owned critical infrastructure. For that reason, and also because millions of people rely on the state's transportation facilities daily, VDOT is pushing hard to protect people and property from the threat of terrorism and crime. [Read more . . .](#)



- [Even before 9/11, VDOT was increasing security. That effort has accelerated.](#)
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VDOT Spirit of Giving



Months after fire destroyed their mobile home, Evelyn and James Berry are moving into a brand new double wide. They continue to give thanks for VDOTers' help.



The spirit of the Christmas holidays remains in the VDOT family year round. [Read about the Berrys \(photo above\) and others the VDOT family has helped...](#)

Answer File



Where is transportation headed? The answer may surprise you.



Fawaz Saraf returns home



What's in a noise wall?



Technicians are Tops!



VDOT Ready for Winter

Travelers, facilities, employees — Security-wise, VDOT has a lot to protect



Photo by Tom Saunders

Roberto Lopez, bridge-tunnel patroller, uses his I.D. card to enter a recently installed security gate at the Monitor Merrimac Memorial Bridge Tunnel south island, one of the additional security measures there. A camera and speaker allow personnel to inform visitors without I.D.'s that a security officer is coming to escort them inside.

years, are now mandatory for all VDOT offices. Background checks, once reserved for ferry boat pilots and other obviously critical jobs, are now being performed on many more employees—from Smart Traffic Center staffs to operators of certain equipment. Also, new procedures are in place to coordinate security measures or reactions in an emergency with other state agencies and the National Guard, as well as the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

Background checks, once reserved for ferry boat pilots and other obviously critical jobs, are now being performed on many more employees.

qualify them for their jobs. "They are focused on providing VDOT with technologies and training that equate to Department of Defense standards," Mondul adds.

All of these measures have brought respect to the department from state and federal agencies. For example, in October the U.S. Office of Homeland Security through its Office of Infrastructure Security conducted a "table-top exercise" with VDOT at the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel (HRBT). It was the first event in the department's quest to find the best way to evaluate the security of bridge-tunnels. Involved in the exercise were representatives of the Department of Emergency Management, Virginia State Police, U.S. Coast Guard, and several surrounding cities. The exercise simulated terrorist scenarios, such as: How do bridge-tunnel personnel respond when a motorist throws a strange package out of a window?

Federal officials appreciated an opportunity to learn how Virginia agencies would cooperate at the HRBT in the face of a potential terrorist

Continue with . . .

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Even before 9/11, VDOT was raising levels of protection in its sphere. Since then the effort has accelerated, and VDOT has made such progress that federal as well as state agencies are looking to VDOT for counsel as to the best ways to protect transportation facilities from the possibility of attack.

"It's a different world. Two and a half years ago we were trying to be transparent and open. Now we have to be safe and legal while being open as we give service to our customers. In that scenario, we've been proactive at VDOT about security," comments Steve Mondul, the head of the department's new division dealing with security issues. "VDOT has installed security systems; it has hardened facilities against attack; and it is setting procedures in place to protect facilities," he states.

Personal identification cards, in use in the Central Office for

VDOT security teams intend to provide technologies and training that "equate to Department of Defense standards."

— Steve Mondul

In the News

**Security-wise,
VDOT has a lot
to protect**

Winter's Here

**Saraf returns from
Iraq**

**What's new on the
Web?**

"Security is now part of all our jobs. It is everyone's responsibility, just as safety became part of our jobs years ago."

— Mike McAllister,

threat, and they plan to use lessons learned here in working with other states. Meanwhile, Mike McAllister, assistant division director, went recently to Denver for a week to consult with the federal Division of Protective Services on its Land Transportation Anti-Terrorism Training Program. He serves as the only state DOT representative for the program, which will assist state DOTs in planning protection of their facilities. It will be offered through the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Athens, Ga.

"Up until now we have concentrated on response measures. Now there is a shift to prevention. Our focus is on interdiction before an incident happens," McAllister notes. This will require a more in-depth appreciation of anti-terrorism measures, he explained. "Experience shows that terrorists will show themselves at least twice in an area before they commit an act of terrorism there."

VDOT is in phase two of a six-phase program to enhance the department's security. In this phase, when security technologies have been ordered for many units, McAllister and his team are busy training staff that will use the technologies, helping them refine their operational procedures so that people and their new equipment are compatible, and then checking back to see if things are working well. A "Red Team" in each district works closely with SEMD in all of these outreaches.

Meanwhile, VDOT is working closely with the Governor's Secure Virginia Panel and the Governor's Commonwealth Preparedness Working Group to make sure our operational policies are compatible in emergencies with other state agencies' policies.

— by Chuck Armstrong

Security enhancements

Security upgrades across the department and the state include:

- A statewide, unified "smart card" based identification and access system, which uses the same technology as the system installed at the Pentagon;
- Comprehensive security assessments for all of VDOT's critical infrastructure;
- Ongoing research to better focus our security resources and to include multi-modal assets;
- A resourced six-year physical security upgrade program;
- Security exercise, training and education programs.

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VDOT has a lot to protect

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AT THE HELM of VDOT's security program:



Steve Mondul, director of the Division of Security and Emergency Management, has extensive emergency management experience. His Virginia state agency service includes positions as state hurricane planning officer and state hazard mitigation officer for the Department of Emergency Services, director of VDOT's Emergency Operations Center, and a special assignment by VDOT's commissioner to coordinate security and anti-terrorism initiatives. Mondul retired as a captain from the U.S. Navy with his last assignment as director of operations, plans and readiness at the Norfolk Naval Base.



Mike McAllister, assistant director of the division, has been implementing security measures in the Central Office for a decade. During that time he was assistant director for the Administrative Services Division. He oversaw the requirement for employee ID's and pass cards and installation of video cameras at entrances. McAllister was a career Navy officer who developed security measures to block terrorists' attacks on U.S. embassies in Denmark, Italy and Indonesia. McAllister heads up security for the department's physical assets.



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Jim Keck, assistant division director, was director of VDOT's Asset Management Program and director of the budget in the former VDOT Maintenance Division. Before joining VDOT, Keck was administrator of the Oncology Clinic at MCV Hospitals and then a senior budget analyst at MCV. He retired from the U.S. Air Force after serving in many posts in the Medical Service Corps, including chief financial officer, chief information officer, and squadron commander at various hospitals. Keck supervises security for the department's information resources and supervises "personnel assurance" or background checks of employees.

Perry Cogburn is manager of VDOT's Transportation Emergency Operations Center in Central Office, a position he has held since 2002. He joined VDOT in 1994 as deputy director of the TEOC. Cogburn served 14 years with the Maine Department of Environmental Protection as an oil and hazardous material specialist, the last seven as the supervisor of a regional response team. Cogburn manages the TEOC's analysis and dissemination of information about anything that has impact on the transportation system or its personnel.

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VDOT has a lot to protect

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Identify it...Secure it...Protect it! CII:Critical Infrastructure Information



Critical Infrastructure Information — or CII. It's a term VDOT employees will be hearing a lot.

What is it? It could be a password to "smart" cards, or a wiring diagram for a security system, or plans for a vital bridge component, or a schematic for the ventilation system in a bridge-tunnel — or many other pieces of VDOT information. Plans for a typical road probably would not be critical, however. In short, it is information that a terrorist or a criminal might want to use to damage VDOT facilities or operations or hurt people using or maintaining them.

State law passed this year says that VDOT must protect CII, and the U.S. Code requires VDOT to have a custodian of CII, who is Steve Mondul, director of the Security and Emergency Management Division. VDOT policy now supports those requirements, stating in one of its articles: "CII

shall be protected at all times, either by appropriate storage or having it under the personal observation and control of a person authorized to receive it."

SEMD is asking VDOT employees for "a good faith effort" to begin identifying "critical infrastructure information," a process that will require an effort over time.

Fortunately, studies conducted by the University of Virginia several years ago have already identified most of the department's critical infrastructure facilities; now, the department is busy identifying information (CII) about that infrastructure. Once identified, it is labeled as CII. "We must look at everything to decide if it falls into what is restricted for contractors and what is restricted for employees," says Mondul. "There is no way around it. We must identify, secure and protect CII. Only authorized people should be able to see it."

Obviously, thousands of documents and items might fall into a CII classification. Examining their potential for this classification takes time, emphasizes Jim Keck, assistant division administrator for the security of VDOT's information resources. **"We're looking for a good faith effort to begin this process. We know that identifying all CII in your possession cannot be accomplished overnight,"** Keck explains.

In order to assist those involved in the identification and marking process, the CII Section of SEMD is developing a multi-faceted outreach program to Central Office divisions and the nine districts. The section will assist in identifying and handling CII, help collect and track data on CII, and develop employees' ability to evaluate CII on their own.

After the initial outreach, SEMD will have follow-up visits with each group to verify members' progress and follow-through. The outreach program will be discussed in detail during the next ISAO Task Force Meeting in early December.

Checking for CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE INFORMATION (CII)

Defining CII: "Systems and assets, whether physical or virtual, so vital to the U.S. and to Virginia that the incapacity or destruction of such systems and assets would have debilitating impact on security, national economic security, national public health or safety, or any combination thereof."

A handy checklist for identifying CII is provided by the Division of Security and Emergency Management. It begins with the question: "At this location, do you have or control access to?" And then gives these possibilities:

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What's new on the Web?

- Any automated system that stores, processes or communicates CII;
- Emergency operations plans and information or emergency action plans;
- Plans or manuals for bridges, tunnels, or bridge-tunnels;
- Security systems documentation;
- Risk assessments or planning;
- disaster recovery plans, etc.

Virginia's Freedom of Information Act: When is information exempt?

While Virginia's Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) does ensure citizens "ready access to public records," the threat of terrorist attack prompted the General Assembly to make exclusions to the act in order to protect information that might be useful to terrorists.

Two paragraphs in the Virginia Code (see Chapter 37, title 2.2-3705, numbers 57 and 69) exclude "plans and information to prevent or respond to terrorist activity." This could include vulnerability assessments, security systems, surveillance techniques, engineering plans and records, training manuals, staff meeting minutes, operational plans (when release would jeopardize security of facilities or people)-and more.

Discretion is given to state officials in deciding when to exercise the exemptions, advises John Karabaic, a security manager in the SEMD and one of a handful of people in Virginia certified as an "information systems security professional." "The need to know must be considered in any circumstance. For example, a contractor working on a security system in a critical infrastructure might need to see a copy of the infrastructure's construction plans", Karabaic says.

Performing a security assessment

Security assessments are coming to VDOT units in several ways.

The Security and Emergency Management Division (SEMD) has been assessing the security risks of VDOT facilities and transportation infrastructure through its Transportation Protection Security Section. Randy Francis, a SEMD auditor, explains:

"We go to a district and start at the main gate and go to the back gate. We note what's right and what needs improvement for security. Then we make a proposal. It might involve more lighting, increasing entranceway security, glazing ground floor windows, and other changes. Then we bring in a security contractor to also make an assessment." Afterward, priorities are set to improve security and a contract is let for the contractor to do the work.

The Critical Infrastructure Information and Personnel Security Section is establishing a task force with one representative from each district and division to recommend protective strategies for the department's sensitive information resources. This effort extends from the librarian at the Research Council, who will examine library resources to determine which should be kept off-line and reserved for those with a "need to know," to the department's state location and design engineer, who will identify engineering plans that could be useful to a terrorist.

Personnel background checks are given high priority at VDOT now, and the SEMD is proceeding with these. Also, the division will examine the department for the strength of its continuity of operations plans in the case of an emergency. These assessments will continue.



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Giving year round! That's the VDOT way

For as long as anyone can remember, the spirit of the Christmas holidays has been the spirit of giving. Within the VDOT family, however, that spirit energizes people year round. Just a few examples will illustrate VDOT's care for its own — and for others.

Culpeper crewmember: 'So many people helped!'



Months after the fire that destroyed their mobile home, Evelyn and James Berry are moving into a brand new double wide. Evelyn's hand, arm and back continue to heal. "Buckwheat" appears fully recovered. Berry thanks the VDOT family for all the help since the tragedy.

Crewmember **James Berry**, Gordonsville AHQ, Culpeper Residency, gets choked with emotion as he talks about the assistance of so many VDOTers following the tragedy that left him and his family homeless.

Berry, his wife, Evelyn, and their daughter, Kim, will never forget this past June 13. That night (Friday the 13th, he recalls with a shrug), they lost their mobile home and about everything else they owned in a fire that left Evelyn badly burned.

"All I had on was a pair of slacks... not even shoes, and they got out in their nightgowns," recalls Berry who still wonders why the smoke alarm did not go off before he was awakened and realized "something was not right."

Later, however, Berry was not dwelling on what happened that night, but on the support and generosity he and his family have experienced since. "People at VDOT have been great. Lots of friends have come and helped out!" At one point, Berry had no more room for any more items from caring coworkers.

A relatively new VDOT employee, Berry came on board two years ago after working for a tree company for 30 years. He was overwhelmed by the assistance rendered by his coworkers at the headquarters — one was even doing his laundry — and by many others throughout his district and even from Staunton District.

"I want to thank everyone for their gifts and for their prayers. I appreciate everything and thank God for them."

Much remains to be done to get back to a "normal" life. Evelyn's burns are healing after undergoing extensive and painful skin grafts. Berry was looking forward to surprising her with a visit from 'Buckwheat,' the family's dog, also injured in the fire. "It's really her dog," he chuckles adding he hoped seeing her pet would take her mind away from the pain for a little while.

He has also obtained the required permits to put another home on the same property. "I was born on that land and my wife and I have lived there for more than 30 years."

Some dry shoes would be nice; crew member got much more

John McDaniel, Jamestown Ferry crew member, lost all his belongings in a rental home when Hurricane Isabel blew through Burwell's Bay in the Isle of Wight County. He reported to work at the ferry as scheduled, however.

While on the job, he told a coworker that he wished he had dry safety shoes and some clean socks and underwear. His wish wasn't long in its fulfillment. The next day, the Hampton Roads District Human Resources team surprised McDaniel with new safety shoes, socks, a Wal-Mart gift certificate, and some cash.

Another event also helped McDaniel through his loss. In a local news broadcast about the hurricane, a reporter interviewed McDaniel as he picked through his belongings amid the devastation. His niece, whom he had not seen in 15 years, saw the story and contacted the ferry, and the two had a reunion. Neither McDaniel nor his niece knew that they had family in the area. Meanwhile, McDaniel received a check from FEMA and a grant from the Red Cross, and he is now happily renting a house in Newport News.

Life@VDOT

**Technicians are
Tops!**

**VDOT's spirit of
giving**

**VDOTer
in Profile:
John Fiddner**

**Equipment Skills
Contest Winners**

Ted Nicholson can't imagine being 'surrounded by a better group of people'

Little Thomas Nicholson is four years old and is recovering from cancer.

"He is truly a little hero. If you had an opportunity to meet him, you would never know he was sick, " says [Vertig McDougald](#), admin. and prog. spec. II in the Chesterfield Residency Human Resources office.

Thomas' father, Ted Nicholson, is grateful for support from VDOT employees all over the state. Nicholson's coworkers have given toys for his children, provided meals and groceries, and donated money to help with little Thomas' chemotherapy treatments.

In an e-mail, Nicholson writes: "I want to tell everyone how much I appreciate the prayers and support that have been received by my family in recent days. We have watched the lines between families, friends and coworkers appear as everyone we know (and many we don't know) offer their support for my son and my family. I can't imagine being employed in a better place or being surrounded by a better group of people in this sad situation."

Little Thomas' prognosis is good. The last bone and lung scan came back clean. He has 15 more chemotherapy treatments and will be done in February if his tests come back negative.

Prom night saved in Salem, as well as household goods

Less than a week before her daughter's senior prom, [Linda Stull](#), program specialist in the Salem District Right of Way Section, and her family lost their home and their belongings in a fire. That was more than a year ago.

At that time, Salem District employees banded together and collected money, clothes, pots, pans and everything else that a new home would need. Right of way employees even found a prom dress that was identical to the one that Lauren, Linda's daughter, had purchased before the fire except that it was a bigger size. The Right of Way employees pooled their resources to purchase the dress and accessories. [Pat Reed](#), district receptionist, worked frantically to alter the dress so that it fit Lauren perfectly on prom night. District staff were overjoyed upon learning that Lauren had been named prom queen.

By way of update, the Stull family has just moved into a new home that they built on the original site and all are doing well.

Tigney hopes to rebuild in time for the holiday

[Richard Tigney](#), crew member, Stephens City AHQ, Edinburg Residency, lost his house in a fire Oct. 18, but he remains undaunted. In fact, he expects to move into his rebuilt house by Christmas. His progress is good, and reports that all he has left to do is put on the roof, put up the drywall and put in the windows.

Tigney is grateful that he has had a place to stay and that people have been so pleasant. He appreciates the help from his fellow VDOTers, both in the residency and Staunton District. People have helped out by giving him cash to replace his belongings. Thanks to the VDOT family, his house will soon once again be a home.

Central Office drive seeks donations

"Employee giving is not in vain. Every family that we help is special," says [Veronica Vaughan](#), the enthusiastic chairperson of the Employees' Benefit Association (EBA) Holiday Food Drive in Central Office. She gladly reports that employee giving "increases every year."

In 2002, the EBA drive helped 22 families, including 52 children, with food donations from Central Office employees, and once again the EBA is inviting employees to submit the names of families in need. Last year, the EBA also learned of needs from a local Angel Tree program. Consequently, employees had an opportunity to give clothing and toys to children through donations of money, as well as give their families food. The same will be true this year.

Want to donate? Call [Stephen Greenwood](#) at (804) 225-4200. Want to help pack boxes with goods and gifts? Call Vaughn at (804) 786-2876. Donations need to be made by Dec. 12.

Many residency and district offices also share with the less fortunate. Check for opportunities in your unit. It's the best way to celebrate the season.

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Racefield Road (Route 622) Success Story

Let me tell you about yet another success story. This one is the result of using the innovative new Rural Rustic Road guidelines that allow VDOT to take a practical approach to paving Virginia's low volume unpaved roads.

A half mile of Racefield Road (Route 622) in James City County needed to be paved and was added to the Secondary Six-Year Plan in 1990 - 13 years ago. Frankly, most of the people that road affected never thought it would get done. The estimated cost was nearly \$900,000 and based on the rate that money was being funneled to that project it would not have been completed until 2010 - 20 years from the time the project was added to the program.

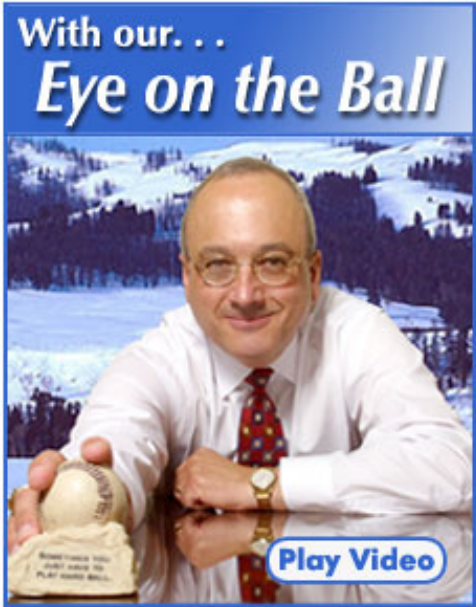
Every so often there's enough frustration with the existing state of affairs that we say "enough is enough" and we have a breakthrough. Fortunately the Rural Rustic Roads program was the breakthrough Racefield Road needed.

With the new flexibility, the leadership in the Williamsburg Residency put their heads together, and agreed they could do the job well below the original estimate.

The teamwork was outstanding and as a result the project took about a week. One week. It was completed on October 6, 2003 at, get this, \$80,000 - 10 times less than the estimate.

This is a perfect example of how we can be creative to get the job done. Paving a half mile of road shouldn't take 20 years, and thanks to innovative programs and inventive minds, it doesn't have to anymore. By using all of the resources available, we can find a way to get results.

Philip



**Play video of Commissioner Shucet
in MPG format (MPG, 6 MB, 2:04) >>>**

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The DASHBOARD SHOWS: Phase one of the Route 123 expansion **All GREEN...**

Project:

Phase one of four phases to widen Route 123 in Fairfax and Prince William counties from a two-lane to a four-lane divided highway was completed under budget and one day ahead of schedule. This phase covered the route from Burke Lake Road to Lee Chapel Road. The improvements brought about reduced travel times for motorists, safer access to new housing developments, new sound barrier walls and a pedestrian trail.

Completion Date:

Actual: June 30
Original: July 1

Costs:

Actual cost: \$12, 241, 811
Budgeted cost: \$12,573,212

Project Team:

Project engineer: Andy Carper
Lead inspector: Ben Mokhtari
Inspector: Chris Carter
Assistant resident engineer: Dusty Holcombe
Inspector trainee: Sam Mosley
Resident engineer: Bob Price
Consultant: Chowdry Gondy

Contractor:

A & W Contracting

Taking Care of Business

Tech-Bytes

Noise walls stop
sound in its tracks

Route 123 in
Northern Virginia is
all Green!



The Route 123 team includes (from left) Ben Mokhtari, Chowdhary Gondy, Samuel Mosley and Chris Carter.

What's Working:

Key elements in the success of this project included daily monitoring of the contractor along with constant tracking of the critical earnings schedule and the project's progress. When any activity appeared to be falling behind, VDOT staff quickly met with the contractor's project manager to discuss how any loss of time or accrual of greater costs could be avoided. Any issues not be resolved at the field level were quickly moved to the residency level or higher, resulting in more expedient decisions that did not compromise on the quality of the contractor's work. Good teamwork within VDOT and monthly partnering meetings with the contractor emphasized quality, budget, schedule, safety, and environmental concerns.

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Winter's here

New techniques give crews an edge in battle with weather



The regional salt dome in Prince William County is the only dome in the Commonwealth with a conveyor system. It can load the chemical onto a tandem truck in one minute.

use front-end loaders similar to what is used at stone quarries."

With Old Man Winter already here in the Commonwealth, VDOT is ready with its own wintry mix of new techniques and equipment to confront snow and ice on the roadways.

New de-icing and anti-icing innovations will enable VDOT to maintain roads more efficiently. While de-icing involves breaking the bond formed between the pavement and precipitation through plowing and spreading chemicals, anti-icing prevents the bond from ever forming. In recent winters, a new anti-icing procedure has proven effective.

Block that snow-pavement bond with the pre-wet technique

"In the last two years, we've started to pre-wet the interstate with magnesium chloride about 24 hours before a storm," said Gary Jennings, assistant resident engineer in the Sandston Residency. "It prevents bonding when the precipitation comes down, and the snow and ice comes right off of the road when we go to remove it." Other districts also are using the new technique.

While all nine VDOT districts battle the white stuff after it comes down with old-fashioned sodium chloride, Northern Virginia District has a new delivery weapon in its de-icing arsenal.

The regional salt dome in Prince William County — the largest in VDOT's inventory — has a stationary loading system that can load the chemical onto a tandem truck in one minute. "This is the only dome in the whole state that loads with a conveyor system," said Jim Gray, Northern Virginia District infrastructure manager. "Most of our facilities



Elevators at the regional dome allow its space to be filled with salt more efficiently. It is poured in from the roof rather than pushed through the doorway.



The Prince William County salt dome has a 20,000-ton capacity. Although it is nearly empty in this photo, the dome is now filled with about 11,000 tons of salt.

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Saraf returns from Iraq

What's new on the Web?

Load that truck with salt with the push of a few buttons

The regional dome was pressed into service for last winter's deluge of snow and ice. The system is so efficient that truck operators can run it themselves if necessary. As in a drive-thru ATM, they can reach out of their trucks, press a few buttons to start the conveyor system and be on their way in 60 seconds. "It takes three to five minutes to do the same thing with a loader," Jennings said. "And that's with the assistance of a loader operator."

Elevators at the regional dome also allow its space to be filled with salt more efficiently. It is poured in from the roof rather than pushed through the door way.

The stationary loading system at the regional salt dome proved so efficient last winter that VDOT has purchased a diesel-powered mobile unit that can load trucks almost as quickly at the Fairfax salt dome (also known as Camp 30). Multiple loaders can feed the mobile unit, and a conveyor from it loads trucks in less than two minutes.

"With approximately 200 chemical routes and 125 subdivision trucks operating out of the Camp 30 facility, it is imperative for trucks to be loaded rapidly," Gray said.

Look for a better way to manage snow-plowing resources

Even with these efficiencies in place, asset management is a challenge in Northern Virginia. The district has 20 storage facilities handling 40,000 tons of sand, 53,000 tons of salt, and 121,000 gallons of liquid calcium chloride. More than 2,400 VDOT and contract employees operate 1,200 pieces of equipment. A goal is to find a way to better manage those assets.

"We're looking into a global positioning system for cellular telephones that can track a truck's location via computer," Gray said. "By looking at a computer monitor, we could see information such as the percentage of time the vehicle is moving and which truck is the closest to a road that needs clearing."

The phones use a combination of satellite and cellular technology to beam the equipment's location to central or regional operations headquarters. VDOT has put in a requisition for 250 Nextel walkie-talkie phones made by Motorola that are equipped with the technology, but they have not yet been approved.

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Fawaz Saraf returns from his homeland of Iraq

The Man with Two Countries



Photo by Trevor Wrayton

Back from Iraq: Fawaz Saraf recently returned from his Iraqi homeland where he worked to restore the country's infrastructure to pre-Hussein standards.

"When the regime fell, I was eager to go back after having been away from Iraq for more than 30 years," he said. "I was fortunate to join a group whose mission was to help rebuild the country. We did more than work on bricks and mortar. We helped restore lives that had been completely ruined."

Saraf left Andrews Air Force Base in a C-17 airplane on June 11 with about 150 other expatriates. One woman's father had been assassinated by the regime. She was the only surviving member of her family, and she was going back for the first time since 1976.

"I'll never forget the faces of those people on the plane as we approached Baghdad," Saraf said. "They were solemn and dazed. You could hear a pin drop as we landed."

Saraf represented the American senior advisor to the Ministry of Housing and Construction. He asked to be assigned to the southern region because this was close to his family home. While there, he had the opportunity to see the house his family left behind.

"It's still owned by my family," Saraf said. "We've rented it all these years. My sister is going to fix it up."

Saraf's sister, Ban, was in Iraq at the same time he was. She worked with local elected councils, and on projects benefiting women. She has since come home to America, and gone back to Iraq to help again. Another sister, Wallada, is a housewife in Baghdad whom Saraf had a chance to see.

You may have heard of the classic novel, "The Man without a Country," but have you met The Man with Two Countries? At VDOT, that man is Iraqi- American **Fawaz Saraf, P.E.** Saraf, 45, a structural engineer working on the Woodrow Wilson Bridge project, recently returned from a three-month assignment helping reconstruct his native homeland of Iraq. Now, he is a man torn between two countries.

In 1970, when Saraf was 12 years old, he and his nine sisters and two brothers left the country with their parents for what the children thought was a summer vacation in Lebanon. When they got there, however, their parents told them they would not be going home to live under the rule of Saddam Hussein's Baath Party. He had not been back to Iraq since.

But in the spring of 2003, he was given the chance to join the U.S. Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance and help restore Iraq's infrastructure. He jumped at the opportunity.

Saraf returned home after 30 years with an invitation to help restore Iraq's infrastructure. They worked on more than just bricks and mortar.

In the News

Security-wise, VDOT has a lot to protect

Winter's Here

Saraf returns from Iraq

What's new on the Web?

The first thing he noticed was Saddam's huge palaces.

Saraf lived and worked in a hotel in Basrah from June until August where he shared a room with four to six people from various countries that are part of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA). He could have had a room to himself elsewhere, but he

preferred to socialize and get to know members of the coalition.

His work involved conducting structural needs assessments and submitting applications to coalition officials for funds to build ministry offices, essential roads, bridges and housing projects. He was shocked by the living conditions of the Iraqi people.

"The first thing you notice is the huge numbers of palaces and monuments to Saddam Hussein. They are truly incredible, and that is what stands out," he said. "Then, you have areas that have suffered decades of neglect and diverted funds. You have five, six or seven families living in one house, which of course leads to all kinds of social problems. You see sewage running down the middle of the street."

As a bridge engineer, Saraf was also appalled at the lack of money spent on infrastructure. For example, instead of fixing a bombed four-lane bridge in the southern part of the country, the regime installed a one-lane pontoon bridge as punishment to people of that region. It has to be repaired about once a month.

"This is the case all over the country," Saraf said. "The bare minimum is spent. Trestle or pontoon bridges that are hard to use and in disrepair are everywhere. I'm a road and bridge person, but our first priority was housing."

Because there are no banks in Iraq, everything is done on a cash basis. When funds were approved for one project, Saraf was given a box with \$40,000 in cash in it.

"I would have to find Iraqi contractors and give them a cash advance for the work. One took me to his home and had a big feast prepared. He was trying to influence my decision on the project."

Because he knew the language and customs, Saraf had more freedom than most civilians and military members who moved around in armed convoys to restricted locations. He could catch a cab for 50 cents and move about freely.

While in Iraq, Saraf flew to Baghdad every two weeks for a meeting at Ministry Headquarters. Flying to the Iraqi capital was dangerous. The plane often had to dive from 20,000 to 5,000 feet in seconds to avoid missiles. The hotel was also fired upon once while he was there.

Still, Saraf would go back if he could be in two places at one time. He recognizes the great opportunity he has in working on the massive Woodrow Wilson Bridge Project - one of the few such projects currently under construction in the U.S. His wife, Magda Cabrero, 42, is a Spanish teacher in charge of the Foreign Languages Department at Falls Church High School, and she is pursuing her Ph.D. For now, Saraf is needed here to help with the carpooling and sporting activities of their two sons, Zachary, 10 and Andrew, 14.

"It was hard to come back to America because of all the good we were doing in Iraq," Saraf said. "The Iraqis had no fuel, no electricity and there was rioting in the streets. But it is still better for them than before."

As a taxi driver put it, "I would rather take this for the next five years than live under Saddam." — *by Sande Snead Fulk*

Iraqis suffer rioting in the streets, "but it is still better for them than before."

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What's new on VirginiaDOT.org?

Northern Virginia has new commuting tools

Accessing HOV Lanes in Northern Virginia just got easier



Trying to reduce your commute time but don't know how to access VDOT's HOV lanes in Northern Virginia? Familiarize yourself by [taking the new virtual tour available on the Web site](#) . The tour not only shows access points along all major interstates in the region but also details the afternoon and morning 'switch' (lane reversals) designed to keep Virginians moving.

How Fast is Northern Virginia moving?

At 5:00 p.m. on any given work day, many people begin wondering how long the commute home will take. Now you can find out in advance what your travel options are by accessing real-time traffic data from your desktop. Using VDOT data compiled by Trichord, the color-coded traffic maps show commuter travel speeds along major Northern Virginia interstates. To check the traffic conditions, click the new **Northern Virginia Traffic Map** link on the [Northern Virginia Commuter Resources](#) page.

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Professionals:
VDOT's equipment managers and technicians win national recognition



Photo by Nick Nicoll

Robert Tanner, Sandston Residency Equipment Shop, one of VDOT's equipment technicians who keep the fleet rolling.

this standing comes through the Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) "Blue Seal" recognition program. ASE is an independent non-profit organization with a mission to improve the quality of vehicle repair and service in the U.S. through testing and certification of automotive technicians. Through ASE, maintenance and repair shops with the highest commitment to their customers and their technicians — and thereby to the best possible repairs — are certified. The program recognizes shops that recruit excellent employees, support their training, and provide them with the tools they need to do their job. To become a Blue Seal shop, the shop must have 75 percent of its technicians ASE certified, with a technician certified in each area of service offered by the shop.

Three years ago, from among hundreds of private, commercial, fleet, utility, and government repair shops in Virginia, only 33 shops were designated ASE Blue Seal of Excellence facilities. Three of those were VDOT shops, or nine percent. This year, the number of Blue Seal shops in Virginia increased to 75. Twenty-six of them are VDOT shops. That's 35 percent of the certified shops in the Commonwealth. For a list of shops with this accreditation, click [Blue Seal Accreditation Shops](#) under [Inside the Winners' Circle](#) below.

INSIDE THE WINNERS' CIRCLE



Better than Mr. Goodwrench!

"Professionalism" is a term earned rather than assumed by VDOT's equipment technicians; and its validity stands year after year as technicians give the best care to the department's equipment inventory, an array extending from weed-eaters to earthmovers.

Statewide and nationwide, VDOT equipment managers, technicians, and shops rate at the top among all repair shops - both commercial and governmental - a position that is supported by a strong commitment to training.

One confirmation of

VDOT equipment technicians maintain 28,000 pieces of equipment in 83 shops statewide, ranging from bulldozers to motor graders and from chainsaws to weed eaters.

In addition, more than 30 VDOT employees have passed all the tests to be designated Certified Supervisors of Maintenance and Equipment by the North American Transportation Management Institute (NATMI). This organization, the only one of its kind nationally recognized, has been educating and certifying safety and equipment maintenance professionals since 1944. NATMI works with the University of Pennsylvania to offer courses and supervise certifications, which designate excellence and achievement in regard to industry standards. For a complete list of the winners in this category, click [Certified Supervisors of Maintenance and Equipment](#) under [Inside the Winners' Circle](#) to the left.

VDOT's top equipment managers recognized that they, too, must keep pace with changes in technology and fleet management practices and improve the professional competence of VDOT's equipment managers. After many searches, Erle Potter, assistant director for equipment

Life@VDOT

Technicians are
Tops!

VDOT's spirit of
giving

VDOTer
in Profile:
John Fiddner

Equipment Skills
Contest Winners

• [Blue Seal Accreditation Shops](#)

Franklin Residency Shop, Hampton Roads District, [Ben Carol](#), Equipment Repair Supervisor

Central Office Equipment Shop, [Jeff Thompson](#) and [Tommy Johns](#), Equipment Repair Supervisors

Accomac Residency Shop, Hampton Roads District, [Randy Nelson](#), Equipment Repair Supervisor

Amherst Residency Shop, Lynchburg District, [Wendell Ponton](#), Equipment Repair Supervisor

Chatham Residency Shop, Lynchburg District, [Burton Johnson](#), Equipment Repair Supervisor

Richmond District Shop, Richmond District, [James Ryles](#), Equipment Repair Manager

Fredericksburg District Shop, Fredericksburg District, [Tom Lee](#), Equipment Repair Manager

Jonesville Residency Shop, Bristol District [James "Chillie" Childress](#), Equipment Repair Supervisor

Lexington Residency Shop, Staunton District, [Hugh Myers](#), Equipment Repair Supervisor

Petersburg Residency Shop, Richmond District, [Rick Pizzullo](#), Equipment Repair Supervisor

Saluda Residency Shop, Fredericksburg District, [Raymond Stanley](#), Equipment Repair Supervisor

Elizabeth River Tunnels Shop, Hampton Roads District, [Bob Dawson](#), Equipment Repair Supervisor

Rocky Mount Residency Shop, Salem District, [John Dunn](#), Equipment Repair Supervisor

Staunton District Shop, Staunton District [Barry Dula](#), Equipment Repair Manager

Suffolk Residency Shop, Hampton Roads District, [Joe Reynolds](#), Equipment Repair Supervisor

Warsaw Residency Shop, Fredericksburg District, [Lyell Gallagher](#), Equipment Repair Supervisor

Wytheville Residency Shop, Bristol District, [Roy Whitehead](#), Equipment Repair Supervisor

Abingdon Shop, [Troy Roberts](#), Equipment Repair Supervisor

Appomattox Shop [Robert Walker](#), Equipment Repair Supervisor

Bristol District Shop [Peyton Campbell](#), Equipment Repair Manager

management in the Asset Management Division, and his staff found the Certified Equipment Manager (CEM) program offered by the Association of Equipment Management Professionals (AEMP).

The CEM is the only industry-recognized program for maintenance and management of heavy equipment, in addition to automobiles and heavy trucks. In addition to their CEM certifications, two equipment managers working with Potter in the Asset Management Division, Dick Bonistalli and Blair Kinker, also have other distinguished certifications. Bonistalli is also certified by the National Association of Fleet Administrators (NAFA) as a Certified Automotive Fleet Manager (CAFM), and Kinker is certified by NATMI as a Certified Director of Maintenance/Equipment. For a list of equipment managers holding the CEM certification, click [Certified Equipment Managers](#) under [Inside the Winners' Circle](#) above.

The confidence that VDOT administrators have developed in the department's technicians, supervisors, and managers is illustrated in a comment by Commissioner Philip Shucet at this year's Equipment Repair Supervisors' and Managers' Workshop: "When I lie down at night to sleep, there are a lot of things on my mind, but one thing I don't have to worry about is the good maintenance of our equipment."

Gary Boyd named Tech of the Year



Gary Boyd

and diagnostic skills at a recent presentation by the AEMP. Boyd's supervisor, Danny Giles, said, "Gary is truly a professional. He's a self-starter, and he's always working. If he has a problem with a vehicle, he will research it on the Internet until he gets an answer. I've never

Erle Potter honored as industry leader



Erle Potter

Behind VDOT's crack team of supervisors and technicians is Erle Potter, a VDOT manager with a long-term sense of mission about the department's equipment. Potter managed the former Equipment Division for nearly 11 years and is now the assistant director for equipment management of the Asset Management Division.

This year, the North American Transportation Management Institute (NATMI) recognized Potter for his dedication to excellence in fleet management. The organization noted that through Potter's leadership, VDOT "has demonstrated itself as an industry leader in continuing education." Potter is not only a licensed professional engineer (P.E.), he also is a certified equipment manager (CEM).

VDOT's highly credentialed technicians have an opportunity every year to compete nationally for the "Technician of the Year" through another organization, the Association of Equipment Management Professionals (AEMP).

Once again, one of VDOT's technicians has been named AEMP Technician of the Year—Gary Boyd of Bristol District.

Boyd, an equipment technician senior in the Gate City repair shop, was recognized for his superior technical

Manassas Shop
Kevin Meade, Equipment Repair Supervisor

Northern Virginia District Shop
Phil Leonard, Equipment Repair Manager

Hillsville Residency Shop
Roger Amburn, Equipment Repair Supervisor

Rumford Shop
Bobby Fletcher

Leesburg Residency Shop
Tom Pearson, Equipment Repair Supervisor

Sandston Residency Shop
Jeff Keesler, Equipment Repair Supervisor

• **Certified Supervisors of Maintenance & Equipment**

Keith Bottenfield
Verona Shop

Bill Craddock
Asset Management Division Shop

Wayne Hawkins
Edinburg Shop

Phil Leonard
Northern Virginia District

Kevin Meade
Manassas Shop

Dan Snyder
Harrisonburg Shop

Phil Louvier
Williamsburg Shop

Charlie Eades
Bristol District Shop

Lyell Gallager
Warsar Shop

James Childress
Jonesville Shop

Roy Whitehead
Wytheville Shop

Steven Foulk
Marion Shop

Anthony Bovee
Fredericksburg District Shop

Raymond Young
Fredericksburg Residency

Willard Hammond
Tappahannock Shop

worked with anyone who is a finer mechanic."

At VDOT Last year, two of the three finalists were VDOT technicians. Fred Brinkley, Hampton Roads District, was AEMP Technician of the Year for 2002, and Bobby Bryant, Fredericksburg District, was runner-up. VDOT also has had winners or runners up in previous years. ([See related story in September-October Bulletin.](#))

TRUCKS TEAM began in 1995

New commitment to training vaulted VDOT shops to the top



The TRUCK Team develops and delivers VDOT equipment technicians' training. Members are (from left) Richard Pizzullo, David Gross, Eric Browne, Butch Clatterbuck, Stacy Williamson, Fred Brinkley, and Roy Whitehead. Not pictured is Phillip Leonard.

A new and whole-hearted commitment to training was made in 1995 by equipment managers who knew that the secret to providing timely and effective repairs to all kinds of equipment in their 83 shops was to have a workforce that was well-trained and also informed about updates to

equipment and repair techniques. They also knew that certification of personnel ensures a level of competence and keeps employees up to date in their areas of expertise.

Consequently, they formed a group to create plans to accomplish this mission, and they adopted a name — TRUCKS Team — that suggested what they were all about. TRUCKS is an acronym for Training Rewards Us with Compensation, Knowledge and Skills. The managers felt that this name "said it all."

With support from a contracted training team, TRUCKS developed training in three areas — "core" repair skills, factory repair techniques, and certification preparation. They took it to more than 550 personnel across the state. Since the team's founding, TRUCKS has sponsored almost a thousand training events across the state. The outcome is VDOT equipment technicians with more than 3,000 Automotive Service Excellence and other certifications.

Joe Reynolds
Suffolk Residency Shop

Randall Nelson
Accomac Residency Shop

Robert Dawson
Elizabeth River Tunnels Shop

Fred Brinkley
Suffolk residency Shop

Randy Davis
Halifax Residency Shop

Robert Walker
Appomattox Residency Shop

Wendell Ponton
Amherst Residency Shop

William Thompson
Appomattox Residency Shop

Allen Weaver
Richmond District Shop

Daniel Eggleston
Richmond District

David Cottingham
Richmond District

Marvin LeBlanc
South Hill Residency Shop

John Dunn
Rocky Mount Residency Shop

Kim Kristensen
Salem District Shop

Randall Potts
Dublin Shop

Roger Amburn
Hillsville residency Shop

Patrick Stanley
Martinsville Residency Shop

• **Certified Equipment Managers**

- Thomas W. Atkins**, Northern Virginia District
- Richard G. Bonistalli**, Asset Management Division
- James F. Brandon**, Richmond District
- James T. Brewbaker**, Salem District
- Carl W. Huskey**, Culpeper District
- G. Blair Kinker**, Asset Management Division
- Bryan K. Maul**, Richmond District
- Robert D. McClure**, Hampton Roads District
- James B. Pearman**, Fredericksburg District
- Raymond Peter**, Northern Virginia District
- Erle Potter**-Asset Management Division
- John H. Puzenski**, Bristol District
- Don Sprouse**, Staunton District
- Carlton D. Stevens**, Lynchburg District

'He knows everything in' the MMMBT

Monitor Merrimac technician installed intricate electronics in the bridge-tunnel; now he hustles to keep them working.



Photo by Tom Saunders

John Fiddner climbing a tower above the traffic control center to maintain a television camera.

responsibility are all the blinking lights and icons and screens in the TMS control room, as well as closed circuit television, time-lapse video, 200 telephones and recordings from them, tunnel lighting, 34 cameras, 32 variable message signs, 16 over-height sensors, 186 traffic signals, 72 vehicle detection loops, weather stations, equipment that keeps everything communicating, hundreds (maybe thousands) of miles of wiring, and backup power systems.

Troubleshooting 100 feet above the road surface or 40 feet below the roadway, John Fiddner knows the Monitor Merrimac Memorial Bridge Tunnel (MMMBT) as well as some workmen know their own workbench. Intimacy with the minute and mammoth fixtures of the MMMBT is imperative for Fiddner. Without it, the electronics technician senior could never keep his commitment to the giant facility — maintaining the bridge-tunnel's world of wiring and electronic wizardry.

Fiddner not only has maintained and upgraded electronic systems at the MMMBT since it opened in 1992, he was a virtual midwife at their birth. Hired with other technicians by the engineering firm of Morrison-Knudsen to install the systems, he was asked by the firm to continue testing them until the state accepted the facility six months after its construction. He stayed on with the bridge-tunnel as a state employee, building a masterful knowledge of its electronic intricacies.

Consequently, **Jim Rector**, supervisor of the four-man electronics team at MMMBT, is quick to commend Fiddner's expertise: "He knows everything in it. He's been here since its conception."

That level of know-how is critical for maintaining a traffic management system (TMS) that moves motorists through a mile-long underwater tunnel and over four miles of bridges above the Hampton Roads waterways. A team of Rector, Fiddner, and two other technicians, Steven Windon and Ray Kotwasinski, also maintains electronics on the James River Bridge nearby.

From blinking lights in the TMS to backup power, Fiddner thrives on the MMMBT's demands.

**VDOTer
in Profile:**

"We're very proud of our system here....We take care of about 100 percent of everything in the TMS here very day," Fiddner says with a sweep of his hand across the MMMBT panorama. He could also mention repairs of carbon-monoxide analyzers, two-way radios, calculators, microwaves — and, as Rector puts it, "anything that walks into the shop."

That variety and complexity of equipment "keeps us rolling all the time," affirms Fiddner, who thrives on the bridge-tunnel's demands.

His continuing commitment to the totality of electronics at the Monitor Merrimac — after years of labor there — is striking. Illustrating this are the extra projects he takes on — converting the system's cameras from black-and-white to color, installing fiber optics to support the local area network, wiring unfinished spaces for office use, rewiring to transmit traffic pictures to the Internet, installing cameras on wrecker bumpers for bridge patrollers moving through tight places, and keeping records of repairs to alert technicians when a part or system repeatedly breaks down (indicating a problem behind the problem).

Fiddner is loath to call in an electronics contractor for any repair or improvement, and rarely ever does. To him, taking care of all that he possibly can is "doing the right thing....We live the VDOT values," he says.

Special projects must not distract from maintenance, however. Much work is toilsome cleaning of parts and checking and rechecking components to make sure that salt-water hasn't corroded them. That means climbing poles and towers wearing a safety harness to clean or

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**Technicians are
Tops!**

**VDOT's spirit of
giving**

**VDOTer
in Profile:
John Fiddner**

**Equipment Skills
Contest Winners**

Calling a contractor is the easy way, but not Fiddner's.

tweak connections and components in lights, signals, cameras and weather stations. It also means spending lots of time in a "bucket" 100 feet above the water or the

pavement. "Not a problem. I enjoy doing this. It's what you do here," the untiring technician tells you.

"He is extremely thorough and professional in every aspect of his job. Everyday he does something extra and he still completes his job in a great way. It's a real pleasure to work with him," Rector comments.

Meanwhile, Fiddner's ear is always open to the TMS, which can at any moment radio something like, "We've lost pan and tilts on camera 16," and then he's off in a truck and up in a bucket in a jiff. "He's a hustler," Rector summarizes. "Every fiber in his body is to do better than he did the day before." — by Chuck Armstrong



Photo by Tom Saunders

Fiddner tweaks the controls of a monitor in the MMBT traffic control center.

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Road Equipment Operation Skill Challenge Events 2003



Budget constraints caused this year's statewide equipment skills contest to be cancelled. However, the results of the residency and district competitions are presented here. Congratulations to all of our champions!

<<< To view the winners for your region, point to Winners and then click a district.

Life@VDOT

**Technicians are
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**VDOTer
in Profile:
John Fiddner**

**Equipment Skills
Contest Winners**

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Road Equipment Operation Skill Challenge Events 2003

Bristol District Winners

District Wide Winners:

Truck Event
Bachoe Event
Loader Event

Winner

Harmon Kilgore
Roger Ely
John Courtney

1st runner-up

Albert Asbury
Jeff Hart
Tim Layne

2nd runner-up

Tim Layne
Ted Boyer
Jeff Hart

Abingdon Residency:

Winner
1st runner-up
2nd runner-up

James Blevins
Rickie Henry
Bryan Call

Wade Andis
Steven Gregory
Michael Parks

Curtis Warren
Bryan Call
Garland Gross

Lebanon Residency:

Winner
1st runner-up
2nd runner-up

Raymond Bostic
Jeff Hart
Jeff Hart

Kenneth Keen
Dave Ball
Danny Owens

Terry Austin
Jeff Deel
Terry Austin

Tazewell Residency:

Winner
1st runner-up
2nd runner-up

Mark Vandyke
E.D. Pruett
Mike Cantrell

Albert Asbury
Morris Asher
Morris Asher

Jimmy Michaels
Mike Cantrell
Mark Vandyke

Wytheville Residency:

Winner
1st runner-up
2nd runner-up

Tim Layne
Ted Boyer
Larry Shupe, Jr.

Tony Copenhaver
Tim Layne
Tim Layne

Larry Shupe, Jr.
Dennis Umberger
Darrell Taylor

Wise Residency:

Winner
1st runner-up
2nd runner-up

Mark Blankenship
Mark Blankenship
John Courtney

Danny Miller
Barney Deel
John Dickenson

Ricky Dotson
John Dickenson
Mark Blankenship

Jonesville Residency:

Winner
1st runner-up
2nd runner-up

Harmon Kilgore
Roger Ely
Roger Ely

Randall Christian
Jeff Austin
Garry Ely

Tommy Ely
Jordon Bruner
Harmon Kilgore

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Road Equipment Operation Skill Challenge Events 2003

Culpeper District Winners

District Wide Winners:

Truck Event
Backhoe Event
Loader Event

Winner

Greg Rosson
James R. Baker, Jr.
Berlie M. Botkin

First Runner-up

Jimmy Staton
C. W. Blosser
Chuck Gentry

Second Runner-up

Berlie Botkin
Ronnie Aylor
Albert Jenkins

Louisa Residency

Truck
Backhoe
Loader

Winner

Berlie M. Botkin
James R. Baker, Jr.
Berlie M. Botkin

First Runner-up

Michael D. Long
Wendell E. Barker
Donald M. Johnson

Second Runner-up

Jason M. Bickley
Jason M. Bickley
Marcos C. Kocolis

Warrenton Residency

Truck
Backhoe
Loader

Winner

Kevin Stringfellow
C. W. Blosser
Greg Banks

First Runner-up

Roy Boldridge
Sonny Peyton
Warren Kuser

Second Runner-up

David Wright
Frank Coffey
David Wright

Charlottesville Residency

Truck
Backhoe
Loader

Winner

Greg Rosson
Donald Woodson
Chuck Gentry

First Runner-up

Mike Hale
Mike Hale
Mike Lamb

Second Runner-up

Keith Sims
Greg Rosson
Craig Shifflett

Culpeper Residency

Truck
Backhoe
Loader

Winner

Jimmy Staton
Eddie Feaganes
Albert Jenkins

First Runner-up

David Jenkins
Jimmy Staton
Jimmy Staton

Second Runner-up

Albert Jenkins
Ronnie Woodward
Ronnie Woodward

Culpeper Section District Complex

Truck
Backhoe
Loader

Winner

Troy Hartley
Ronald Aylor
Bobby Burke

First Runner-up

Bobby Burke
Brian Lowenbach
Brannon Suder

Second Runner-up

Ronald Aylor
Brannon Suder
Brian Lowenbach

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Road Equipment Operation Skill Challenge Events 2003

Fredericksburg District Winners

District Wide Winners:

Winner

First Runner-up

Second Runner-up

Truck

Doug Berry
George Wright
Eric Landon

Backhoe

C. D. Muraca, Sr.
Andy Gordon
Dave Cravitt

Loader

Scotty Southworth
Todd Nelson
Barry Powell

Warsaw Residency

Winner

First Runner-up

Second Runner-up

Eric Landon
Todd Vanlandingham
Malcolm Fallin

Alvin Balderson
Andy Gordon
William Lewis

No Entry
No Entry
No Entry

Saluda Residency

Winner

First Runner-up

Second Runner-up

George Wright
Jacob Crum
Gary Melton

Charlie Muraca
Preston Bristow
Keith Williams

Todd Nelson
Barry Powell
Jacob Crum

Bowling Green Residency

Winner

First Runner-up

Second Runner-up

Doug Berry
Mike Moss
James Wright

Dave Gravitt
Ray Hamilton
Johnny Starkey

Scottie Southworth
Paul Owens
Doug Berry

Fredericksburg Residency

Winner

First Runner-up

Second Runner-up

Richard Castleman
Don Bennett
Matt Roberson

Bobby Jett
Matt Roberson
Brandon West

Bobby Jett
Rodney Green
Mark Inscoe

Fredericksburg Dist. Complex

Winner

First Runner-up

Second Runner-up

No Entry
No Entry
No Entry

No Entry
No Entry
No Entry

No Entry
No Entry
No Entry

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Road Equipment Operation Skill Challenge Events 2003

Richmond District Winners

(District wide competition unable to be held.)

Amelia

Winner

1st runner-up

2nd runner-up

Ashland

Winner

1st runner-up

2nd runner-up

Chesterfield

Winner

1st runner-up

2nd runner-up

Petersburg

Winner

1st runner-up

2nd runner-up

Sandston

Winner

1st runner-up

2nd runner-up

South Hill

Winner

1st runner-up

2nd runner-up

Truck Event

Slick Reed
Kevin Smith
Wormy Buchanan

Roger Payne
Tony Moore
James Hackler

Craig Lewis
Ralph Jackson
Russell Peffers

David Townsend
Brad Jones
Daniel Comer

Jeff Allgood
Chip Stowell
Sammy Yates

Linwood Thomas
Jerry Baisey
Morris Daniels

Backhoe Event

Dennis Hayer
Jimbo Coldiron
Jim Ray Cregg

Beanie Mallory
Andy Scott
Robert Adams

John Connelly
John Eckert
Russell Peffers

Billy Hayes
Stanley Kidwell
Brad Jones

Jeff Allgood
John Christoph
Rickey Corn

Marc Clary
Michael Evans
Andy Morris

Loader Event

Slick Reed
Dennis Hayer
Dale Bowman

Andy Scott
Anthony Smith
Joel McCormick

Ralph Jackson
J R Robertson
Josh Booe

Stanley Kidwell
John Mabry
Mary Clary

John Christoph
Jeff Allgood
Steve Hepner

David Baisey
Brian Currin
Harry Corum

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Road Equipment Operation Skill Challenge Events 2003

Northern Virginia District Winners

District Wide Winners:

Truck
Backhoe
Loader

Fairfax

Truck
Backhoe
Loader

Manassas

Truck
Backhoe
Loader

Leesburg

Truck
Backhoe
Loader

NOVA A144 District Complex

Truck
Backhoe
Loader

Winner

Ralph Plamp
Robert Redd
David Piper

Winner

Jamie Vroman
Chuck Stone

Winner

Tony Deal
Bernard Anderson

Winner

David Scheulen
David Piper

Winner

Lonnie Whetzel
Richard Streightiff

First Runner-up

Lonnie Whetzel
Jamie Vroman
Maury Sutphin

First Runner-up

Wayne Sutphin
Jamie Vroman

First Runner-up

Ralph Plamp
Richard Tuomola

First Runner-up

Tommy Laycock
Maury Sutphin

First Runner-up

John Carter
John Carter

Second Runner-up

John Carter
Richard Streightiff
Rodney Corner

Second Runner-up

Eddie Myers
David Klink

Second Runner-up

Jerry Page
Jerry Page

Second Runner-up

Jerry Compton
None

Second Runner-up

Pete Dietrich
Robert Redd

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Road Equipment Operation Skill Challenge Events 2003

Lynchburg District Winners

District Wide Winners:

Truck
Backhoe
Loader

Amherst

Truck
Backhoe
Loader

Appomattox

Truck
Backhoe
Loader

Amherst

Truck
Backhoe
Loader

Appomattox

Truck
Backhoe
Loader

Chatham

Truck
Backhoe
Loader

Dillwyn

Truck
Backhoe
Loader

Halifax

Truck
Backhoe
Loader

Lynchburg District

Truck
Backhoe
Loader

Winner

Kirk Gibson
S. Kent Shelton
Steve Toller

Winner

Charles Baker
Roby Absher, Jr.
Kenneth Burnley

Winner

William Wright
Ronald Harvey
Leonard Treadway

Winner

Charles Baker
Roby Absher, Jr.
Kenneth Burnley

Winner

William Wright
Ronald Harvey
Leonard Treadway

Winner

Kirk Gibson
S. Kent Shelton
S. Kent Shelton

Winner

Steve Brown
Clarence Coleman
David Brightwell

Winner

Dennis Clark
Watt Womack
Steve Dunn

Winner

Steve Toller
None
Steve Toller

First Runner-up

Steve Toller
Roby Absher, Jr.
David Brightwell

First Runner-up

Roby Absher, Jr.
Kenneth Burnley
Lonnie O. Tomlin

First Runner-up

Jimmy Martin
William Wright
Donnie Sherlin

First Runner-up

Roby Absher, Jr.
Kenneth Burnley
Lonnie O. Tomlin

First Runner-up

Jimmy Martin
William Wright
Donnie Sherlin

First Runner-up

S. Kent Shelton
John Rigney
Kirk Gibson

First Runner-up

Bill King
Steve Brown
Steve Brown

First Runner-up

Steve Casen
Mike Overstreet
Watt Womack

First Runner-up

Vincent Hunter
"
Arrowstead Ragsdale

Second Runner-up

Steve Brown
Ronald Harvey
Leonard Treadway

Second Runner-up

Lonnie O. Tomlin
Joe Tomlin
Les Toller

Second Runner-up

Ronald Harvey
Kenneth Moore
Cassell Hamlette

Second Runner-up

Lonnie O. Tomlin
Joe Tomlin
Les Toller

Second Runner-up

Ronald Harvey
Kenneth Moore
Cassell Hamlette

Second Runner-up

David Strickland
Eddie Walker
John Rigney

Second Runner-up

Stacy Williamson
none
Stacy Williamson

Second Runner-up

Tim Langford
none
none

Second Runner-up

Arrowstead Ragsdale
"
Wayne Mason

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Road Equipment Operation Skill Challenge Events 2003

Hampton Roads District Winners

District Wide Winners:

Truck
Backhoe
Loader

Accomac

Truck
Backhoe
Loader

Franklin

Truck
Backhoe
Loader

Norfolk

Truck
Backhoe
Loader

Suffolk

Truck
Backhoe
Loader

Waverly

Truck
Backhoe
Loader

Williamsburg

Truck
Backhoe
Loader

Elizabeth River Tunnels

Truck
Backhoe
Loader

Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel

Truck
Backhoe
Loader

Monitor Merrimac Bridge Tunnel

Truck
Backhoe
Loader

Hampton Roads District Complex

Truck
Backhoe
Loader

Winner

Alfred L. Spiers
Quinton Brown
Robert Ellis

Winner

George Hall
Art Allen
Charles Bradford

Winner

Richard Harrison
Keith Crocker
Trey Kea

Winner

Rick Tsikuris
Ben Sparks
Brian Trax

Winner

Dale Kania
Robert Ellis
Robert Ellis

Winner

Alfred L. Spiers
Alfred L. Spiers
No Entry

Winner

Lester Wilson
Quinton Brown
Lester Wilson

Winner

Kip Holloway
No Entry
Troy Robinson

Winner

Mike Delp
Jeff Absher
No Entry

Winner

Chris Kirshon
Chris Kirshon
Mike Werhan

Winner

Jerone Hunter
Jason Harrell
Billy Riggins

First Runner-up

Lester Wilson
Robert Ellis
Billy Riggins

First Runner-up

Tommy Shaw
Wes Taylor
George Cabarrus

First Runner-up

Mark Allen
Leroy Robinson
Brenda Babb

First Runner-up

Ben Sparks
Ernie Vasques
Steve Blackley

First Runner-up

Dan Shelton
Dyke Jordan
Greg Horton

First Runner-up

Craig Ridout
Claiborne G. Lewis
No Entry

First Runner-up

Rick Scott
Carl Ray
Carl Ray

First Runner-up

James Baines
No Entry
Marshall Webb

First Runner-up

Jeff Absher
Paul Hicks
No Entry

First Runner-up

Bernie Austin
Tim McLendon
Tim McLendon

First Runner-up

Johnny Boone
Sammy Wolford
Michael Parker

Second Runner-up

Jerone Hunter
Jason Harrell
Steve Blackley

Second Runner-up

Nick Jenkins
Jason Johnson
Tommy Shaw

Second Runner-up

James Stukes
Richard Harrison
James Whitfield

Second Runner-up

Perry Allgood
Howard Johnson
Ray Bagley

Second Runner-up

Wallace Greene
Chris Zephir
Alain Hayer

Second Runner-up

Gregory L. Dillard
No Entry
No Entry

Second Runner-up

James Chapman
Lester Wilson
Brian Gentry

Second Runner-up

Robert Keene
No Entry
James Baines

Second Runner-up

Michael Reeves
Art Echloes
No Entry

Second Runner-up

Tim McLendon
Mike Werhan
Bernie Austin

Second Runner-up

Michael Keith
Billy Riggins
Alvin Andrews



Road Equipment Operation Skill Challenge Events 2003

Salem District Winners

District Wide Winners:

Truck
Backhoe
Loader

Winner

Jeff Henderson
Larry Weeks
Joe Walker

First Runner-up

Joe Walker
David Smith
Jeffery Sowards

Second Runner-up

Bobby Zimmerman
Dewey Kirby
David Smith

Rocky Mount

Truck
Backhoe
Loader

Winner

Marshall Meadows
Did not compete
Did not compete

First Runner-up

Dale Williams

Second Runner-up

Robert Patterson

Bedford

Truck
Backhoe
Loader

Winner

Bobby Zimmerman
Dewey Kirby
Jeffery Sowards

First Runner-up

Gary Cumby
Bobby Zimmerman
George E. Brown

Second Runner-up

Johnny Wayne Martin
Marvin Puckett
Dale Meador

Martinsville

Truck
Backhoe
Loader

Winner

Billy Byrd
Did not compete
Frank Griffith

First Runner-up

Ronnie Earles

Billy Byrd

Second Runner-up

Frank Griffith

Ronnie Earles

Salem

Truck
Backhoe
Loader

Winner

Joe Walker
Joe Walker
Joe Walker

First Runner-up

Tony Slaydon
Ronnie Bryson
John Richards

Second Runner-up

Derek Dooley
Sam MtCassell
Gene Slusser

District Complex

Truck
Backhoe
Loader

Winner

Jeff Henderson
David Smith
David Smith

First Runner-up

Buddy Mullins
Gary Reaves
Jeff Henderson

Second Runner-up

Barry Francisco
Jeff Henderson
Barry Francisco

Christiansburg

Truck
Backhoe
Loader

Winner

Eric Underwood
Dean Smythers
Pat Bower

First Runner-up

Forest Hinkley
David Trump
Ronnie Akers

Second Runner-up

Dale Smith
Eric Underwood
Tommy Grubb

Hillsville

Truck
Backhoe
Loader

Winner

C. Jerrell Dalton
Larry Weeks
Did not compete

First Runner-up

Duane Piatt
Ronald Sowers

Second Runner-up

Stuart Vass
Stuart Vass

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Road Equipment Operation Skill Challenge Events 2003

Staunton District Winners

District Wide Winners:

Truck
Backhoe
Loader

Winner

Ronnie Martz
Shane McCray
Greg Varner

First Runner-up

Jerry Foster
John Barker
Bill Caldwell

Second Runner-up

John Wolfe
Sam Good II
Jeff Moyers

Edinburg Residency

Truck
Backhoe
Loader

Winner

Joe Nicely
John Barker
No Competitors

First Runner-up

Roger Getz
Kevin Dean

Second Runner-up

Kevin Dean
No entry

Harrisonburg Residency

Truck
Backhoe
Loader

Winner

Ronnie Martz
Don Minnick
Gary Rankin

First Runner-up

Linden Stroop
Gary Via
Buddy Mongold

Second Runner-up

Herb Crider
Kevin Comer
Gary Via

Truck Team

Winner

Linden Stroop, Herb Crider
Ronnie Martz, Bill Strawderman

First Runner-up

Second Runner-up

Ricky Thomas, Larry Papotnik

Lexington Residency

Truck
Backhoe
Loader

Winner

John Wolfe
Bill Caldwell
Bill Caldwell

First Runner-up

Bill Caldwell
Robert Fridley
Bradlee Vess

Second Runner-up

Mike Bezok
Moe Tingler
Anthony Murphy

Luray Residency

Truck
Backhoe
Loader

Winner

Jerry Foster
Sam Good II
No competitors

First Runner-up

John Zirkle
Gary Good

Second Runner-up

Terry Custer
No entry

Verona Residency

Truck
Backhoe
Loader

Winner

Will Griffin
Shane McCray
Jeff Moyers

First Runner-up

Chester Moats
Roger Kennedy
John Morrison

Second Runner-up

Steve McDonagh
Lance Cash
Ronnie Hodge

Staunton District Office

Truck
Backhoe
Loader

Winner

Greg Varner
Jack True
Greg Varner

1st Runner Up

Kenny Wright
Steve Malcolm
Steve Malcolm

2nd Runner Up

Jeff Hamilton
Scott Arbogast
Jeff Hamilton

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Tech-Bytes

VDOT's Noise Walls Stop Sound in its Tracks



Photo by Al 'Dean' Covey

An absorptive noise wall protects both sides of the Chippenham Parkway (Route 150) near Richmond.

Taking Care of Business

Tech-Bytes

Noise walls stop
sound in its tracks

Route 123 in
Northern Virginia is
all Green!

Before I built a wall
I'd ask to know
What I was walling in or
walling out

— From Robert Frost's
"Mending Walls"

Throughout history, walls have kept inhabitants safe from harm. The Great Wall of China, Hadrian's Wall, and the walls of Babylon, all provided protection from invasion. Likewise, Virginia's 118 miles of noise walls keep invasive sound at bay for those who live close to the roar of major roadways.

Since construction of the first barriers in the early 1970s, VDOT's noise abatement program has evolved to a position of national prominence. "Ranking second in total square footage and linear miles of sound wall construction, but only fourth in actual dollars spent, shows our program's performance in creating value-conscious designs," observes **Lloyd Arnold**, VDOT's noise abatement manager.

But apart from having more miles at lower costs, just what's so special about VDOT's noise walls? More than meets the eye as it turns out. The program's extensive studies of impacted areas, innovative design techniques, and use of absorptive concrete material all contribute to VDOT taking a lead in the field.

Noise Wall Milestones

To determine if a noise wall is necessary, VDOT conducts a study. Studies are only undertaken if traffic noise is likely to increase on federally funded road construction, realignment, and widening projects. A study entails analyzing traffic volume for a construction site and comparing existing noise levels with those expected after construction. An increase in noise levels must approach or exceed Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Noise Abatement Criteria (NAC) for a noise wall before a wall is considered for design and construction.

In designing a wall, strategic location, height, building materials, costs, aesthetics, feedback

1969

Congress passes National Environmental Policy Act.

1970

Congress passes Federal-Aid Highway Act.

1972

Congress passes Noise Control Act.

1975

First noise wall constructed in Virginia Beach.

1982

VDOT begins using software modeling tools.

1988

First absorptive noise wall constructed on the Western Freeway in Hampton Roads.

1989

CTB adopts VDOT's first Noise Abatement Policy.

1993

Third party funding permitted to cover construction costs .

1995

FHWA Highway Traffic Noise Analysis and Abatement Policy and Guidance Provided.

1996

Began including benefited properties into cost-effectiveness formula.

1997

Change barrier cost-effectiveness ceiling from \$20,000 to \$30,000 per protected residence.

2003

GIS cataloguing of sound walls begin.

from the affected public, and even weather must be contemplated before construction begins.

The more precise the placement of a wall, the more effective it will be in reducing noise levels. To determine the optimum location, VDOT engineers examine road geometry in relation to an impacted area. Modeling software, which presents numerous scenarios for consideration, guarantees the most cost-effective solution. More often than not, walls are most beneficial when placed as close as possible to either an impacted area or the noise source.

When it comes to size, one doesn't fit all. Predicted noise levels as well as costs dictate how high and how long a barrier should be. In general, the higher and longer a noise wall is, the more effective it will be. Engineers study topography to place noise walls at the highest ground elevation possible, not only to decrease their physical height but also their costs.

Noise walls are composed of a variety of materials including earth berms, metal, wood, plastic, concrete, acrylic and even recycled tires and wood chips. Earth berms are the cheapest, most effective type of wall; however, these walls are rarely used due to limited right of way. Lightweight metal and plastic are typically used on bridges to keep bridge costs down. Ground-mounted concrete is cost-effective and durable and is by far the most common material used throughout the Commonwealth.

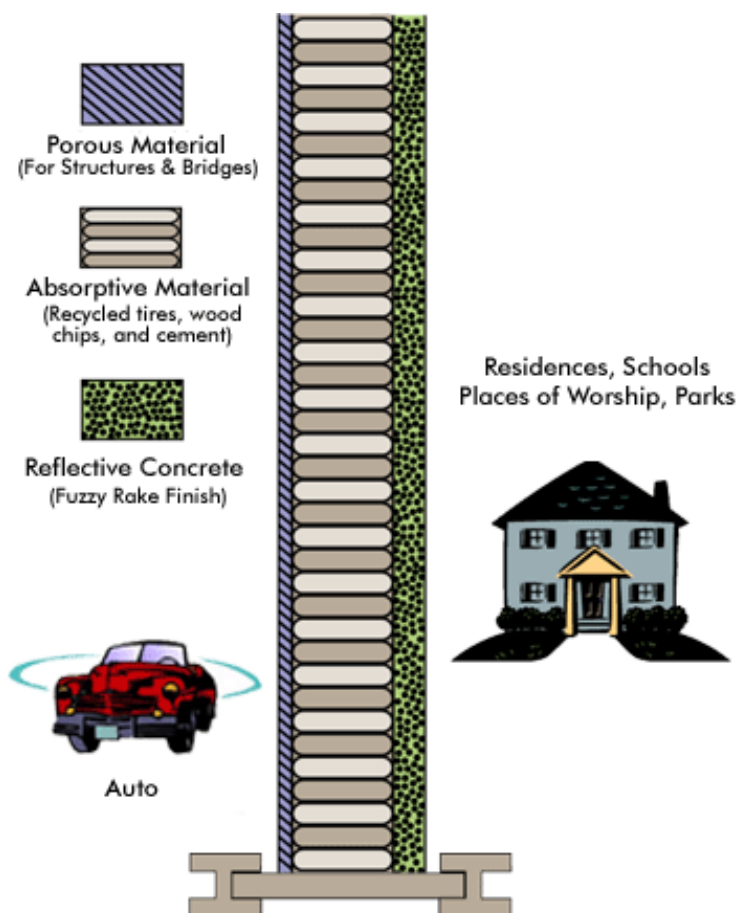
VDOT's use of absorptive concrete and metal barriers, as well as recycled rubber and wood chips, set the program apart from many of its counterparts nationwide. Like a black hole, absorptive materials have the ability to trap noise energy — by 70 percent or more. Surprisingly lightweight, the absorptive material is melded to a reflective concrete with a fuzzy rake finish that is both durable (to withstand the elements) and rough (to deter graffiti). Until 1988, VDOT mostly installed reflective noise walls, which reflect noise energy away from a protected area. Since then, VDOT has lead the country by taking advantage of the extra protection absorptive noise walls provide.

Aesthetics is increasingly important as noise walls are constructed along roadways other than interstates. For consensus, property owners, VDOT designers and local planners must collaborate to ensure a wall is in keeping with the architecture of a locality. The Route 1 project near Mount Vernon in Northern Virginia, for example, will include a wall using an ashlar stone finish, compatible with its historical setting.

Interested citizens in

parks, schools, places of worship, hospitals and residences or other public-use, non-profit facilities are also given an opportunity to comment on a proposed wall.

VDOT leads the country in innovative, low-cost design techniques.



ANATOMY of an ABSORPTIVE NOISE WALL

Where is the program headed? "VDOT won't be deciding about noise walls in a vacuum," says Arnold. In the future, the approach to noise abatement will be even more inclusive as the public, VDOT design teams, districts, localities, and developers all search for the best possible solution.

VDOT does not retrofit noise walls on existing highways.



The DASHBOARD SHOWS: Phase one of the Route 123 expansion **All GREEN...**

Project:

Phase one of four phases to widen Route 123 in Fairfax and Prince William counties from a two-lane to a four-lane divided highway was completed under budget and one day ahead of schedule. This phase covered the route from Burke Lake Road to Lee Chapel Road. The improvements brought about reduced travel times for motorists, safer access to new housing developments, new sound barrier walls and a pedestrian trail.

Completion Date:

Actual: June 30
Original: July 1

Costs:

Actual cost: \$12, 241, 811
Budgeted cost: \$12,573,212

Project Team:

Project engineer: Andy Carper
Lead inspector: Ben Mokhtari
Inspector: Chris Carter
Assistant resident engineer: Dusty Holcombe
Inspector trainee: Sam Mosley
Resident engineer: Bob Price
Consultant: Chowdry Gondy

Contractor:

A & W Contracting

Taking Care of Business

Tech-Bytes

Noise walls stop
sound in its tracks

Route 123 in
Northern Virginia is
all Green!



The Route 123 team includes (from left) Ben Mokhtari, Chowdhary Gondy, Samuel Mosley and Chris Carter.

What's Working:

Key elements in the success of this project included daily monitoring of the contractor along with constant tracking of the critical earnings schedule and the project's progress. When any activity appeared to be falling behind, VDOT staff quickly met with the contractor's project manager to discuss how any loss of time or accrual of greater costs could be avoided. Any issues not be resolved at the field level were quickly moved to the residency level or higher, resulting in more expedient decisions that did not compromise on the quality of the contractor's work. Good teamwork within VDOT and monthly partnering meetings with the contractor emphasized quality, budget, schedule, safety, and environmental concerns.

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Commitment to right ethical decisions is 'absolutely essential to the health' of VDOT



Greg Whirley

By Greg Whirley, VDOT Inspector General

Recent local, state and national headlines related to public scandals have led to an increased focus on promoting ethical behavior in organizations. The public is fed up with fraud, waste and abuse in the corporate world and elsewhere. Taxpayers are demanding accountability for delivery of services they have been promised.

What is ethical behavior?

Ethical behavior involves knowing your values and using them to determine what is the "right thing" to do. Being ethical means that you know what's right, you care about what's right, and you actually do what's right. It means that you think carefully about the challenges and make ethical choices even when they are difficult. It means that you don't turn your back on an ethical crisis and make it someone else's problem.

Why is ethical behavior important to the Inspector General? The Inspector General's mission includes preventing and detecting fraud, waste and abuse. The foundation for doing that is to have good core values. When everyone in the organization shares those values, we know we have an organization that will do the right thing. Ethical behavior nurtures trust and is absolutely essential to the health of our organization.

"VDOT's Values and Behaviors" have been published and communicated. Having a set of values isn't enough, though. We must talk about our values, and encourage each other to act ethically. We must make ethics a priority in order to create an ethically grounded culture - there must be real commitment to ethical behavior. We must adopt and live by our values.

Let me pose a few questions:

- Is it ethical to allow a contractor, consultant or vendor to continue working when you know VDOT specifications are not being met?
- Is it ethical to use state resources for personal gain?
- Is it ethical to observe a theft in your office and not report it?
- Is it ethical to continue an inefficient business process because we always did it that way?
- Is it ethical to improperly charge expenditures to accommodate budgets?
- Is it ethical to ignore or not take timely action on a problem?

How would you respond? Many times, right vs. wrong ethical choices are in the eyes of the beholder. That is why it's important that we have core values to live by. If the core values are grounded, the answers are obvious.

I have served the Department for three years as Inspector General and thirteen years as Controller. Based on this experience, I believe that the majority of our work and business decisions are based on good ethical behavior. Only in isolated cases have I experienced situations that were based on poor ethical choices. In my view, we are an organization that shares common core values and demonstrates good ethical behavior. However, we can improve!

Each one of us can make ethics a priority for VDOT and do a great deal to create a culture grounded in values. We can keep the bar high by living our values, adhering to ethical principles when we deal with issues, and supporting those actions that demonstrate a commitment to our values. As the Commissioner has stated, "Our actions are critical to our reputation and our purpose to Keep Virginia Moving."

If you need assistance with related issues, please contact **Alex Sabo**, internal audit; **Judson Brown**, external and construction audit; **Wanda Wells**, investigations; or myself.

In closing, I think these time-honored maxims are worth considering:

Point of View

Leadership Challenge

50 Years Ago

Answer File

Humor

"One falsehood spoils a thousand truths" ...An Ashanti proverb
"Do not do what you would undo if caught" ...Leah Arendt
"Facts don't cease to exist because they are ignored" ...Aldous Huxley

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Humor

It's always close to the center line (heart) of VDOT

Our newest constituency

Time for a turtle traffic count



Photo by Ryan Hall

The pace has quickened in turtle traffic in recent years as turtle travelers elect to take paved routes.

This souped-up turtle trucker, looking for higher velocity transit, was one of the first to take the new Loudoun

Orchard Road in Northern Virginia, which was recently paved under the Rural Rustic Road Program. In fact, the turtle was accessing the road as the ribbon was being cut. When interviewed, the traveler asked us to thank [Tom Farley](#) and the team for getting the job done *under budget* and *ahead of schedule*.

Point of View

Leadership Challenge

50 Years Ago

Answer File

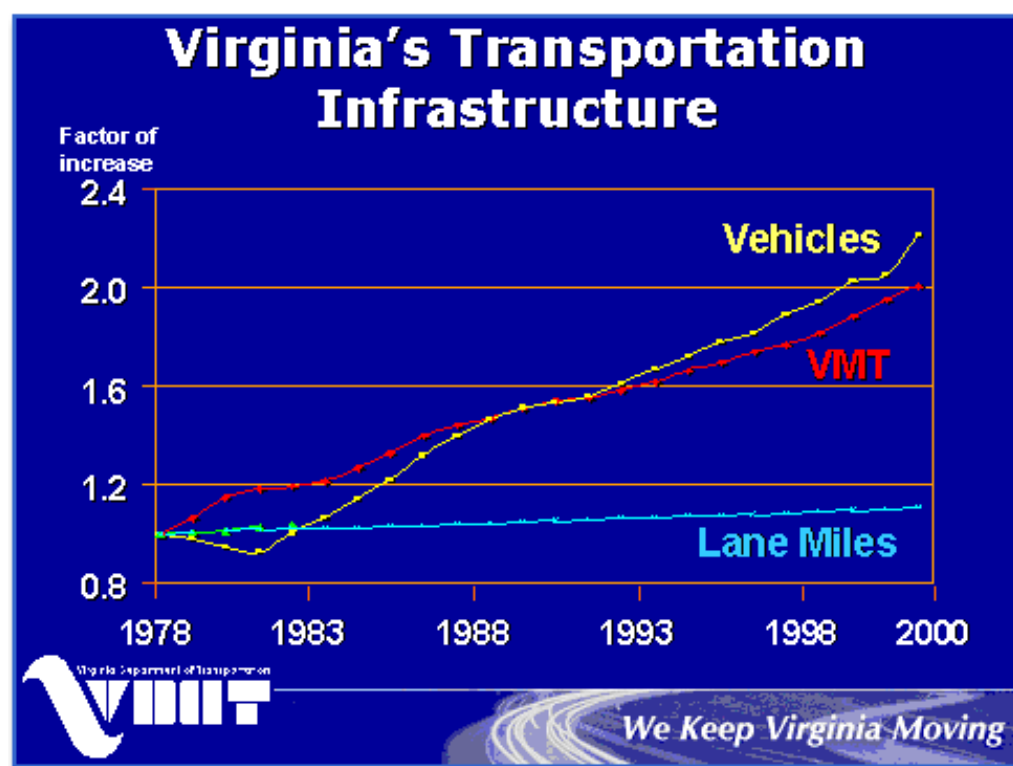
Humor

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Answer File

TRANSPORTATION in Virginia's FUTURE

Vehicles and vehicle miles traveled have doubled on Virginia's highways since 1978. Lane miles have increased very little.



Vehicles and vehicle miles traveled have doubled on Virginia's highways since 1978. Lane miles have increased very little.

Transportation Crisis" at Virginia Tech. His talk was part of the Vecellio Distinguished Lecture series sponsored by the School of Engineering's Construction Engineering and Management Program. Vecellio lectures are given each year to expose engineering students to current issues facing the engineering field. Highlights of the lecture included:

- Population is expected to grow more than 45 percent in the next two decades in some areas of Northern, Central, and Southeast Virginia; and in many other areas, between 20 and 40 percent.
- Virginia had 4.3 million jobs in 2000; it will have 6.3 million in 2025.
- Virginia's unmet transportation needs increased from approximately \$20 billion to approximately \$80 billion in 2002.
- Since 1986, state transportation revenues have lost 40 percent of their buying power.
- The state transportation budget outlook is for modest growth in revenues over the next six years.

For a copy of the lecture, contact [Colin Ceperich](#) in VDOT Public Affairs at (804) 225-3712. VDOT employees can also view the PowerPoint at [Vecellio](#). (To view speaker notes once in the PowerPoint document, "right click" and, from the dialog box, choose "speaker notes.")

Point of View

Leadership Challenge

50 Years Ago

Answer File

Humor

What changes will affect Virginia's transportation system over the next 25 years? How well is Virginia prepared to face them?

Inflating highway construction costs, multiplying vehicles, and more miles traveled paint Virginia's transportation future as a challenging one. Also, a greater share of road money goes to debt service than ever before, and more funding must be used for maintenance of Virginia's aging highways. Meanwhile, transportation tax rates have remained static. Twenty years ago, when Virginia increased its sales tax by a half-cent to help pay for roads, was the last significant increase. Virginia's gas tax has remained at the same level for years-17.5 cents per gallon.

In October, [Commissioner Philip Shucet](#) presented some of the realities of "Virginia's

50 Years Ago



'At or near the top'

Season's Greetings from the Highway Commission 50 years ago remind us that we always stand on the shoulders of department employees who labored before us and whose goals were high. Penned by Commissioner James Anderson, the greetings have a déjà vu ring to them, but in a retrograde fashion. They were printed in the December 1953 Bulletin as follows:

"With the arrival of another holiday season, the members of the Highway Commission wish to extend to each of you in the

Department their best wishes for a happy Christmas and a successful New Year.

"Maintenance of our 48,000-mile highway system is a complex, never-ending task that requires the constant effort and cooperation of everyone in the Department. Despite many handicaps, our highway system today is in better physical condition than ever.

"More is being written and said about our highways today than at any time in the past. In addition to the problems already with us, new ones undoubtedly will arise. Our ability to meet these problems depends largely upon the loyalty and unity of purpose of everyone in the Department.

"Virginia's highways should always be at or near the top in excellence. With your help the job will be done."



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Point of View

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Names in the News

Knowledge management has director



Photo by Ed Deasy

Maureen T. Hammer is VDOT's new director of Knowledge Management.

The new director of VDOT's Knowledge Management Office is **Maureen T. Hammer**. She comes to VDOT from the Virginia Retirement System where she has been knowledge management services administrator since 2000.

Hammer will lead VDOT's effort to use technology and other means to enable personnel throughout the department to share knowledge, lessons learned, innovative practices and technical expertise to improve the department's business and operational practices.

From 1997–2000, Hammer was librarian in the Legal Department of the Montana Power Company in Butte, Mont., administering library and information services for the department and the corporation. From 1995-1997, she was microcomputer services manager at the library of the University of Texas Health Science Center. From 1992-1994, she was associate director of library services and then director of computer and education at the Charlotte (N.C.) Area Health Education Center.

She also has had experience in Montana as a computer instructor at a community college and an executive director of a development corporation.

Hammer has a bachelor's degree in French and political science from the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, a bachelor of arts degree from the University of Nebraska at Omaha, a master of library science degree from Emporia State University, and she is studying for a doctoral degree in organizational management at Capella University.

Clarke named Christiansburg RE

David D. Clarke will lead the Christiansburg Residency, moving up from assistant resident engineer there.

Clarke oversaw the highway construction program in the New River Valley while the Smart Road was being built and during planning for the new Route 460 Bypass. Since 2000, Clarke has been VDOT's on-site manager at the Smart Road. In 2001, he also became manager of the I-81 traffic management center housed at the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute.

Clarke joined VDOT in 1990 as an engineer trainee following his graduation from Virginia Tech with a bachelor's degree in civil engineering. In 2001, he earned a master's degree in public administration from Virginia Tech. The native of Williamsburg also completed a bachelor's degree in English at the University of Virginia in 1984. He and his wife, Martha, have two children and live in Montgomery County.

Russell is Wytheville RE

Mike Russell, P.E., is resident engineer for Wytheville Residency. He was promoted after working in the Salem District Location and Design Section for the past three and a half years.

In Salem, Russell managed four engineering teams, which designed projects throughout the district. Earlier, he was an associate vice-president of transportation for Anderson and Associates, directing highway design and corridor studies for VDOT.

He is a 1989 graduate of Virginia Tech with a bachelor's degree in civil engineering. He and his wife, Kathleen, live in Radford.

Route 460 manager appointed

VDOT
People

Names in the News

All in the Family

Retirements

Obituaries

Living Our Values



Mike Russell, P.E.

James O. Clarke, who comes to VDOT with 13 years' experience in the environmental planning field, has been named a location studies project manager in the Environmental Division. In that role, Clarke will manage an interdisciplinary study team of VDOT and consultant staff considering improvements to Route 460 between I-295 in Prince George County and Route 58 in Suffolk.

Clarke worked as a project manager with the consulting firm of H. W. Lockhner Inc. in Richmond, providing impact assessments on construction projects, many of them for VDOT. Clarke holds a master's degree in environmental planning from Virginia Tech and a bachelor's degree in history from James Madison University. He is accredited by the American Institute of Accredited Planners.

Potential improvements under consideration for Route 460 include upgrades to the current route and construction of an alternate highway in a new location. The team is conducting transportation studies and collecting environmental data in this phase of the work. Clarke also is managing a study for the Harrisonburg Connector project.

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All in the Family



Behind the annual Oyster Roast of the Central Office Employees' Benefit Association is this team—Brenda Finney, Brenda Carter, and Roy Bradley—and others on the committee. Oysters, steamed shrimp, and crab were on the menu for the October event at the Bon Air Community Center.

VDOT People

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Living Our Values

Central Office

Lunch with a member of the Commissioner's staff was won by nine Central Office employees in a drawing during Customer Service Week. The lucky ones are: **Irvina Carter**, **Tiffany McNeil**, **Jim Keck**, **Tina Robinson**, **Catherine Hill**, **Sanjay Garg**, **Bill Beuter**, **Nikki Outlaw**, and **Joan Hammer**. Happy lunching!



Learning Center: **Denise Spoenlein**, communications coordinator, and husband, Jeff, have a bouncing baby girl named Riley Katherine. Happy parenting!

Location and Design: More future L&D employees on the way? Here's the birth report: **Derrick Easter**, info. tech. spec. II, and Regina Franklin, are the proud parents of a new baby girl, Deya Demetri, born Oct. 11.

Mark Cole, engineer I, and wife, Amanda, are the proud parents of a baby boy, Ethan Andrew, born Oct. 11. **Brian Banta**, engineer I, and wife, Jamie, are the proud parents of a baby girl, Maya Rose, born Oct. 22. Congratulations

to all new parents!

Congratulations to **John T. Downer Jr.**, engineer I, who married Marianne Wile on Sept. 27.

Public Affairs: Congratulations to **Rob Monroe**, media spec. III, and wife, Beth, on the birth of a new daughter, Lilah Mae.

Right of Way: **Bobbi Lopez**, admin. prog. spec. III, and her husband, Jamie, announce the birth of Jaret James. Welcome to the world, Jaret!

Structure and Bridge: **Conchita D. Chavez**, eng. tech. III, is celebrating the birth of a grandson, DiMarco Tomas Chavez.



The chili champs in the annual Chili Cook-Off of the Transportation and Mobility Planning Division are (from left)—Kim Spence, second place, Chad Tucker, first place, and Erik Johnson, third place. Their recipes are available in the VDOT Cookbook, now on sale for \$10. Proceeds go to the Combined Virginia Campaign until the campaign ends and then to the VDOT Workers' Memorial.

Culpeper District

District Office: **Carl Huskey**, a 27-year veteran of VDOT, has been named equipment manager for the district shop. As manager he and his team of mechanics are responsible for the maintenance and repair of all equipment, ranging from small pool cars, to mowing tractors, VDOT's orange dump trucks, and three snow blowers.

Fredericksburg District

Bowling Green Residency: Employees recently promoted include: **Kenny Quesenberry**, to eng. mgr. I; **Carrie Kile**, to admin. off. spec. III; and **Steven Smallwood**, to eng. tech. I.

Hampton Roads District

Monitor Merrimac Memorial Bridge Tunnel: **Steve Windon**, electronic technician sr., has earned the Certified Electronics Technician (CET) designation. Congratulations!

Norfolk Residency: **Greg Kloster**, construction inspector, and his wife, Jennifer, welcomed a baby boy to their family, Cody Allen, born Oct. 12. Cody's grandmother is **Wanda Kloster** who works in the Hampton Roads District Equipment Shop.

Waverly Residency: **Suzie Johnson** has transferred from the Jamestown-Scotland Ferry to the residency where she will be fiscal technician at the Waverly AHQ. **Linda Emory**, who is also coming to Waverly from the Jamestown-Scotland Ferry, has been promoted to fiscal technician at the Surry AHQ.

Lynchburg District





Lynchburg District won the Scenic Virginia award for "Best Implementation of Tree-Trimming Policy." The policy was approved by the Commonwealth Transportation Board after the General Assembly passed legislation in 2001 for statewide standards for trimming trees on the state's roadsides. The nine VDOT districts were given the responsibility for implementing policy to support the legislation. Lynchburg won in 2003 for "consistently employing tree-trimming practices that provide safety to motorists while preserving the aesthetics of roadside trees. At the awards presentation were **David R. Kenerson Jr., Scenic Virginia president; **Tim Wiles**, district maintenance engineer; **Tom Ramey**, district administrator; **Ray Lacy**, district roadside manager; and **Leighton Powell**, executive director of Scenic Virginia.**



Dillwyn Residency: Congratulations to new grandpa **John Chenault**, transp. maint. supt. at Hampden-Sydney AHQ. Granddaughter Rachel Lynn was born Sept. 18 during a visit from Hurricane Isabel.

District Office: Double congratulations to **Andy Babish**, on his promotion from senior geotechnical engineer in the Materials Division, Central Office, to assistant district materials engineer in the district--and also on the birth of a son, Samuel Nathan, to him and his wife, Lynn, a former employee of the Administrative Services Division. Another materials team member, **Sidney Burns**, eng. tech. III, is a proud father--of new son Benjamin David. Congratulations!

Richmond District

Outstanding efforts to partner with VDOT customers brought recognition to the following Richmond District employees at a recent breakfast: **Nathan Hogan, Phyllis Holley, Todd Beach, Sandra Brosch, Karen Payne, Carole Bruce Clark, Cheryl Lewis, Shirley Ozmore, Erica Jeter, Erin Armentrout, Debbie Drewry, Shelley Smith, Betty Respass, Chris Burke, Kathryn Horne, Mildred Holmes, Zelda Mullen, Donna Robertson, James Ryles, Robert Szymczak, Brian Bradley, Roger Williams, Chuck Harding, Lisa Ayscue, Steve Yerta, Lee Godsey, Charles Castle, Tom Ebbert, Sara Cross, and Jeannette Coleman.**

Chesterfield Residency: Congratulations to **Crystal Smith**, permits specialist sr., and her husband, Johnathan, on the birth of a baby boy Johnathan Blake Jr.

Congratulations to the following employees who have earned certification as erosion and sediment control inspectors: **Don Pierce, Harvey Frazer, Dayton Garrett Jr., John Stogner, Lewie Gilpin, Keith Goodrich, Crystal Smith, Harold Glover, Ryan McGrath, and Michael Dean.**



Salem District

District Office: **Lori Law**, civil rights spec. III, and **Billy Law**, crew member at the Troutville AHQ, are the proud parents of a new little girl, Laci Ann.

Salem Residency: Best wishes to **Tina Brooks**, office spec. II, on her marriage to Daniel Eubank Jr. on Oct. 25.

Martinsville Residency: **Robin Keeler**, eng. tech. III, and husband, Tim, are the proud parents of a new son, Timothy Alan II. Congratulations! Welcome to the world, Elizabeth Ann Mabe! And congratulations to her parents, **Tim Mabe**, admin. svcs. spec. III, and his wife, Lisa!

Staunton District



Staunton District employees spared nothing (effort, costumes, recipes, props) getting ready for their recent chili cook-off to benefit the Combined Virginia Campaign (CVC).

And their enterprise resulted in big bucks for this year's campaign!



Chili Cook-off Report: The year's district event (the fourth annual) featured "truck-loads of chili" of "every kind imaginable." They also had "an ice cream team with mouth-cooling sundaes." It worked! The district raised \$900 for this year's CVC. "Best Overall Chili" award went to the Traffic Engineering's Signal Shop for their "Deer with 2 Beans" chili-deerlicious!

Edinburg Residency: **Larry Seal**, eng. tech. III, and his wife, Dorothy, have devoted much of their own time to landscaping the residency complex. For their labors, the Keep Virginia Beautiful Program recently presented them the Outstanding Individual award at an awards presentation and luncheon in October. Way to go, Larry and Dorothy!

Harrisonburg Residency: **Scott L. Strother** has been promoted from transportation operator II at the Mount Crawford AHQ to transportation operations manager I at the Chimney Rock AHQ.

Lexington Residency: **Joseph W. Kayton** has been promoted from transportation operator II to transp. oper. mgr. I at the Fairfield AHQ.

District Office: **Heather M. Hull** has been promoted from eng. tech. II at the Lexington Residency to technician III in contract administration at the district office.

At the Bill Bower Tournament

The 16th Annual Bill Bower Golf Tournament was held recently at the London Downs Golf Course in Lynchburg. Ninety-six people from five districts, Central Office, and the Research Council participated. Mrs. Bower and family members also took part.

Winners in three categories were:

Lowest score (58) - **Mike Perfater** and **Gary Allen**, Research Council, along with **Ron Durham** and **David Thompson**;

Calloway (handicap) - **Dennis Morrison** (Staunton District), **John McEwan** (retiree), **Tim Wiles** (Lynchburg District) and Ray Eanes;

Mixed team - **Mike Rudd** (Louisa Residency), **Brent Sprinkle** (Culpeper District), **Lana Rudd** and **Jerry Brown**.

The tournament is named in honor of **Bill Bower**, the late district engineer for Culpeper. It is presented by the Employees' Benefit Association Presidents' Council.

Obituaries

Loyd Edgar Creasy, 88, highway foreman, Bedford Residency, died Sept. 22; he retired in 1977 with 20 years of service.

George L. Dillon, 87, highway foreman, Salem Residency, died Nov. 2; retired in 1978 with 30 years of service.

Robert L. Galloway, 78, asst. right of way manager, Lynchburg District, died Sept. 5; retired in 1991 with 39 years of service.

Albert Roley Kendrick, 90, maintenance supt. B, Bedford Residency, died Nov. 27; retired in 1975 with 36 years of service.

Betty Martin Mills, 63, fiscal technician, Salem Traffic Engineering Section, died Nov. 14; retired in 1998 with 20 years of service.

Earl E. Neff, 75, office svcs. spec., Lynchburg District, died Oct. 10; retired in 1995 with 17 years of service.

Daniel M. Saverline, 51, policy planning mgr., Human Resources Division, died Dec. 4; he had 12 years of service.

Floyd Shepherd, 68, crew member, Bowling Green Residency, Farmers AHQ, died Oct. 6; retired in 1996 with 43 years state service.

James B. Wilford, 82, equip. operator B, Bedford Residency, died Oct. 13; retired in 1983 with 12 years of service.

Retirements

Wayne F. Baker, eng. tech. III, Fairfax Maintenance, 35 years.

J. L. Bishop, transp.oper. mgr. II, Jonesville Res., 34 years.

Michael J. Curran, trades mgr. I, Culpeper Dist., 5 years.

Raymond P. Dugan, transp. oper. mgr. II, Amherst Res., 25 years.

Robert W. Dye, transp. oper. II, Tazewell Res., 10 years.

W. F. Ferrell, eng. tech. III, Hampton Roads Dist., 38 years.

William E. Furr, Jr., transp. oper. II, Chesterfield Res., 30 years.

Julian W. Gates, transp. oper. I, Dillwyn Res., 6 years.

Robert B. Harrison, Jr., land acq. & prop. mgt. agent III, Right of Way & Utilities Div., 34 years.

Wanda S. Jenkins, admin. spec. II, Abingdon Res., 25 years.

Thomas L. Jones, transp. oper. II, Wytheville Res., 30 years.

Ervin D. Kile, equip. serv. repair tech I, Harrisonburg Res., 31 years.

Donald W. Little, arch.-eng. II, Location and Design Div., 45 years.

Dinah T. Merrick, admin. spec. II, Materials Div., 37 years.

George M. Mozingo, transp. oper. II, Northern Virginia Dist., 27 years.

Joe Murphy, transp. oper. II, Manassas Res., 25 years.

Edward J. Thoma, eng. tech. III, Northern Virginia Dist., 16 years.

Ralph P. Tolbert, transp. oper. II, Halifax Res., 19 years.

Richard E. Warfe, transp. oper. II, Chatham Res., 31 years.

Lynn C. Whitenack, arch.-eng. mgr. I, Christiansburg Res., 32 years.

Ernest T. Williams, transp. oper. II, Chesterfield Res., 7 years.

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Living Our Values

VDOT's customers often send messages of praise and appreciation for the good work of employees. In this column we present just a sampling.

Bristol District:

District employees deployed across the state to help with damage assessments in the wake of Hurricane Isabel. They include [Quinton Fields](#), [Mel Counts](#), [Ron Flanary](#), [David Lamie](#), [Danny Owens](#), [Lois Woods](#), [Tony Layne](#), [Darrell Street](#), [Bob Anderson](#), [Belinda Lewis](#), [Mike Crabtree](#), [Pam Heath](#), [Glenn Wilson](#), [Mathew Cox](#), [Daryl Hensley](#), and [Bobby Wolf](#).

Culpeper District

Citizen Roderick Knighton writes: "Notwithstanding the ongoing repair of power and telephone equipment affected, I want to express my compliments and appreciation for the outstanding job your guys have done in getting the roads cleared and passable following Hurricane Isabel. What I have seen is that every road, paved or otherwise, that I have had need to travel has been made at least passable in a few days since the event. I saw a gradall and a crew on my road moving downed trees before the water even went down....Response like this doesn't just happen. I am certain it takes prior contingency planning and hands-on supervision from the top down."

Dillwyn Residency

Resident Engineer [Alan Leatherwood's](#) team received a delectable and deserved thank-you from Jaime Falls, a chef in Dillwyn: cup cakes. Mr. Falls writes that they were for the "hard work and effort during Hurricane Isabel."

Hampton Roads District

[Ron Barnes](#), trans.oper.mgr. I, Smithfield AHQ, Suffolk Residency, notes the effectiveness of [Gary Byrum](#), trans.oper.mgr. II, district Equipment Section, when he was sent to help after Hurricane Isabel. He writes that an "extremely large tree" was blocking Business 10 in the historic section of Smithfield. He continues: "Not only was the tree entangled in power lines and aerial fiber optics, it was also threatening one of Smithfield's 200-plus-year-old houses. Gary was able to maneuver the crane into position and take the weight off this tree to make it safe to remove....Please pass on to Gary our gratitude to have such an experienced person to help conduct an otherwise extremely dangerous job and make it safe for all involved."

And from an external customer of the district comes thanks from Superintendent [Bob Jones](#), Sanitation District Boat Harbor Treatment Plant. He was writing after Hurricane Isabel to the Monitor Merrimac Bridge Tunnel manager [Mike Dangerfield](#) and staff. They had provided parking on the tunnel's North Island for the plant's employees when the employees' parking entrance was under water. [Stephen Brace](#) was given special praise for shuttling their employees from parking to their work site in a van. Jones continues: "As in the past...you and your staff have provided us with assistance beyond our expectations. We could not ask for a better neighbor."

Salem District

[Jeff Patrick](#), safety service patroller, remedied a dangerous situation for a New York motorist and his family after their vehicle stalled and its transmission locked up on a lane of I-81. When the motorist, Kevin Glover, could not restart the car or unlock the transmission, he called 911 and was put in touch with Patrick. The patroller arrived, unlocked the car, and pushed it off of the highway. He also called for a tow truck and arranged for a motel room for the family. Mr. Glover writes: "I am convinced that Jeff's actions averted another accident or series of accidents on I-81....His friendly attitude and helpfulness is a great reflection on your department and the state of Virginia."

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